

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

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REP. MARKEY: ‘REPUBLICAN ReCONciliation CON GAME SACRIFICES AMERICAN ELDERLY, CHILDREN, SICK TO PAY FOR TAX CUTS’

*American Nurses Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, Families
USA and Others Endorse Markey Amendment to Strike Cuts*

WASHINGTON, D.C. –Today the U.S. House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee is holding a markup on the Budget Reconciliation that proposes cutting up to 10 billion dollars from Medicaid, the health program serving the poor and elderly, in order to offset the proposed 70 billion dollars of Republican tax cuts. Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA), a senior Democratic Member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee offered an amendment to strike all of the Medicaid cuts that was defeated in a straight party line vote (24-Y, 30-N).

“Republicans are not proposing to reform Medicaid. We are here, under the gun of the Budgeteers, to cut \$10 billion from Medicaid so that the Republicans can protect their \$70 billion in tax cuts for wealthy Americans. I am opposed to this entire scheme, so I am offering an amendment that rejects the notion that we should be cutting Medicaid in order to fund tax cuts for the wealthy,” said **Rep. Markey** during the debate.

“Squeezing the most vulnerable Americans in order to pay for tax cuts is a very serious issue. Instead of addressing the health and welfare of millions of Americans we are playing the ‘The Republican ReCONciliation Game.’

“The ReCONciliation Game Starts with the House Republicans’ plan to cut benefits for the most vulnerable in order to turn over this money to the Republicans on the Ways and Means Committee.

“The Energy and Commerce Committee is the ATM for Ways and Means Republicans, who get to decide how to send this money back to the wealthiest Americans. Ways and

Means Republicans have proposed extending the capital gains and dividend tax cut which will mostly benefits people who make more than \$1 million a year.

“In the Republican ReCONciliation Game, every millionaire’s a winner!!!!

“Finally, Republicans who have created huge deficits with their tax cuts for the rich call for further cuts in Medicaid, student loans, and other federal programs – cuts which they argue are needed to CUT THE DEFICIT!!!

“At a time when 37 million Americans are in poverty and the infant mortality rate in some cities in America is higher than some cities in India, this is no time to offer comfort to the comfortable in the form of massive tax cuts financed by cuts from the most vulnerable segments of our society – the poor, the aged, and the sick. The Republicans are forcing a false and immoral choice. House Energy and Commerce Democrats will not serve up America’s most vulnerable in order to create more tax cuts for millionaires.”

The budget cuts today would disproportionately affect the most vulnerable Americans. Medicaid serves almost 60% of people in nursing homes and 1/3 of all babies who are born in the United States. Additionally, 8 million Americans with disabilities depend on Medicaid.

The Alliance for Retired Americans endorsed the Markey amendment stating: “Seniors in nursing homes use and need Medicaid more than any other age group. Cutting the lifelines of these most vulnerable Americans is the cruelest thing Congress could do.”

The Markey amendment has the support of 25 health and senior advocacy groups including: Families USA, American Nurses Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, National Disability Rights Network, National Association of Social Workers, The Arc of the U.S., Easter Seals, NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby, Coalition on Human Needs, National Indian Health Board, Planned Parenthood, National Citizens' Coalition for Nursing Home Reform, United Cerebral Palsy, National Respite Coalition, Alliance for Retired Americans, National Mental Health Association, National Citizens' Coalition for Nursing Home Reform, National Rehabilitation Association, Massachusetts Hospital Association, National Association for Children's Behavioral Health, Housing Works, Helen Keller National Center, National Coalition on Deaf-Blindness, American Dance Therapy Association and ACORN National.

The Republican ReCONciliation Game chart is attached or can be found at:
<http://www.house.gov/markey/>